

Quality, accessible, affordable healthcare should be a right, not a privilege to be reserved for the wealthy few. It's shameful that the wealthiest nation in the world leaves 46 million of its people without health insurance. I'm working to change that. That is why I have voted repeatedly to expand children's health insurance and why I am a co-sponsor of the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act. This bill would extend quality affordable healthcare to all Americans by establishing the United States National Health Insurance Program to provide all medically necessary care, such as primary care and prevention, prescription drugs, emergency care, and mental health services.

I also proudly co-sponsored the Health Centers Renewal Act. This bill reauthorizes the Community Health Center program until 2012 and became law on October 8, 2008. Community Health Centers play vital roles in underserved communities by providing low-cost services and are often the only way the uninsured can access healthcare.

### **HEALTH RESEARCH FUNDING:**

I have worked to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health. The NIH is our country's premier institution for medical research. It embodies our greatest hopes for treating and curing debilitating diseases like heart disease, cancer, diabetes and so many other illnesses that American families battle every day.

In addition, with my strong support, the House passed the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act in October of 2008. This bill authorized \$40 million over the next four years for federal research investigating the links between breast cancer and the environment. It is estimated that 182,460 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year and, unfortunately, 40,480 women will die from this disease. With continued investments in research we can defeat these devastating diseases.

### **MEDICARE:**

As a strong supporter of Medicare, I seek to increase the availability of such quality, affordable care for seniors and people with disabilities. I strongly supported the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act, which preserved Medicare beneficiaries' access to physician services and other essential health care services by preventing the 10.6% cut in Medicare reimbursements that were scheduled in 2008. The Act also included important beneficiary improvements in mental health coverage, preventive coverage, and assistance for low-income beneficiaries.

I also support efforts to improve Medicare Part D, which covers prescription drugs. This program leaves many unable to afford their life-saving prescription drugs. I am a proud co-sponsor of the Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act. This bill, which passed the House of Representatives in 2007 and still awaits action in the Senate, would require the government to negotiate with pharmaceutical manufacturers to achieve the most affordable prices for Medicare participants.